

HISTORY OF THE PARK

This park, which is the second largest in the state, is made more scenic by the Meramec River which divides the park almost in half as it winds its way through the bottoms beneath the heavily timbered hills.

The park, consisting of 7,153 acres, contains numerous springs and more than twenty caves, of which Fisher's Cave is the largest and most interesting.

The Meramec River, from which the park derives its name, was so called after the Indian tribe which journeyed along its shores. This river later served as a highway for the early Spanish and French voyagers.

Through the years nature has covered the hills and valleys with a large variety of sturdy oaks, gum, pine, cherry, dogwood, redbud, walnut, hackberry, maples, a wealth of undergrowth, and flowers. From the time the redbud and dogwood bloom in the spring to the flaming fall review, the picturesque Meramec valley, flanked by the Ozark hills, is one of the outstanding beauty spots in Missouri.

FISCHER CAVE

This cave said to be the first large cave discovered west of the Mississippi River extends back in the rock formation for more than a half mile and contains thousands of stalactites of great magnitude.

According to Pioneers of the area Governor C. Fletcher of St. Louis, who was elected in November of 1864 at the close of the Civil War, held his Inaugural Ball in the cave and one of the rooms is still known as the Governor's Ballroom. Tradition has it that the smoke from the pine knots and kerosene torches drove everyone from the cave.

The cave is of varying temperatures and has many interesting formations that the guides interpret into fanciful figures as they lead the vacationists along the path. The "Ice Box" is the coldest room with a temperature of 50 degrees fahrenheit. Tickets for going on the guided trip can be obtained at the concession building which is located at the entrance of the cave.

CAMPING

The campground with its modern restroom and shower buildings, coin-operated automatic laundry equipment, complete travel trailer camp, and trailer dumping station adds to the convenience and comfort of the campers.

SWIMMING, FISHING AND BOATING

These sports are actively participated in on the beautiful Meramec River. Boats for fishing or just pleasure riding may be rented at the concession stand which is located at the entrance of Fischer Cave. Those who wish to "cool off" in the warm summer months are invited to try the invigorating waters of the spring fed Meramec River.

PICNICKING

The large area near the park entrance provides an enjoyable spot for picnicking with its large shade trees, tables, and outdoor cookers. A large open space is used for individual or team sports with playground equipment available for the children.

NATURALIST PROGRAM

This enjoyable and enlightening program offers the park visitor an opportunity to explore their natural surroundings through direct experience under the leaderships of the park naturalist.

The naturalist guides park visitors on nature hikes, gives talks on nature, and directs an evening program which includes lectures and motion pictures on nature and points of interest in Missouri. Please consult bulletin boards for further information on this program which is in operation during June, July, and August.

MODERN VACATION FACILITIES

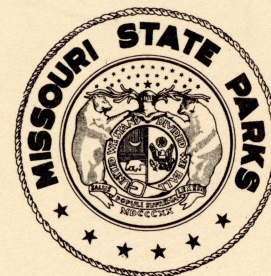
The Dining Lodge and Cabins provide meals and lodging at a popular price for those who desire this type of vacation. Both daily sleeping and house-keeping cabins are available, and arrangements for their rental may be made with the concessionaire at the Lodge where camping provisions can also be obtained.

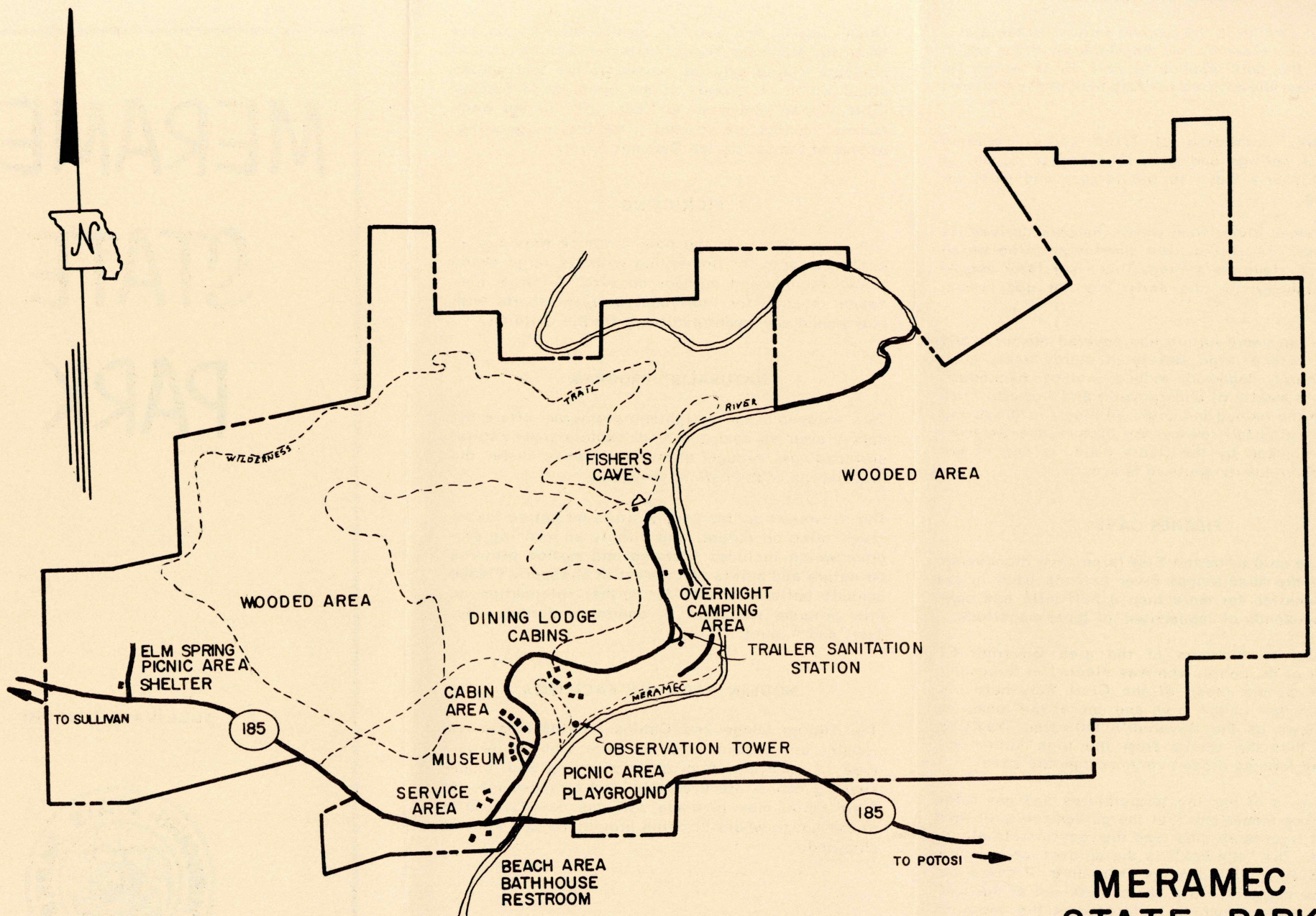
For information regarding other State Parks and Historic sites please write:

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MERAMEC STATE PARK

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